(a) whether her Ministry has taken any steps to make four "Dhams" visit easy and safe since the State of Uttarakhand is a unique religious tourist place where lakhs of pilgrims visit every year;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (c) The maintenance of law and order, is the State subject, as such the safety of tourists is the responsibility of the State Government, However. the Ministry of Tourism has requested all the States and Union Territories for deployment of tourist police/Tourist Security Organization at the prominent tourist places.

The Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, extends Central Finance Assistance under its various Plan Schemes, to the proposals received from the State Governments/Union Territory Administrations, which are complete in all respects as per the scheme guidelines subject to *inter-se priority* and availability of funds. Ministry of Tourism had sanctioned the following projects to the State of Uttarakhand for the infrastructural development of four "Dhams":

(i) Development of Badrinath Dham circuit (2004-05): Rs. 702.09 lakh

(ii) Development of Kedarnath Rudra Prayag (2005-06): 453.13 lakh

(iii) Development of Gangotri destination (2005-06): Rs. 481.42 lakh

(iv) Development of Yamunotri Dham destination (2006-07): Rs. 448.99 lakh

India among 20 most dangerous places on earth

835. SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether three days long terror strike in Mumbai has pushed India among 20 most dangerous places to visit on earth according to British Daily Telegraph report;

(b) if so, whether Daily observed that British Government was currently advising against all, but essential, travel to Mumbai;

(c) whether India has been listed alongside countries Pakistan, Iraq, Afghanistan, Israel and various other countries;

(d) if so, whether economic slow down and terror attacks hit tourism industry; and

(e) if so, to that extent these two factors are responsible affecting tourism and what are the steps Government propose to take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (c) An article had appeared on the website of the Telegraph newspaper, listing India among the 20 most dangerous places. However, the article was purely the personal view of the journalist and not of the British Government.

Following the terrorist attack in Mumbai, the British Government had issued an advisory, advising its citizens "against all but essential travel to Mumbai". This advisory was subsequently downgraded, advising citizens to "exercise caution around large public gatherings".

(d) and (e) There has been a decline in foreign tourist arrivals and foreign exchange earnings from tourism as detailed below:

	November 2008	December 2008	January 2009
Foreign Tourist Arrivals*	521247	521990	487262
Percentage change over corresponding month of previous year	-2.1%	-12.5%	-17.6%
Foreign Exchange Earnings (in US$ million)@	1005	1046	941
Percentage change over corresponding month of previous year	-12.5%	-18.7%	-31.9%

*Provisional Estimates @ Advance Estimates

The Ministry of Tourism has taken several initiatives for promoting tourism to the country. These include liberalizing the Marketing Development Assistance Scheme for tour operators promoting India, organizing Road Shows in important tourist generating markets overseas, arranging familiarisation tours to India for international travel trade and media representatives to keep them updated on safety / security conditions in the country, media campaigns in the print and electronic media and a "Visit India 2009" scheme, in collaboration with all stakeholders including airlines, hotels, tour operators, State Governments for incentivising travel to India during the period April to December 2009.

Suspension of employees in Indian museum

836. SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of personnel employed in non-Gazetted and Gazatted categories respectively in the Indian Museum, Kolkata, as on 1 January, 2007 and 2008 indicating number of employees placed under suspension in the respective years;

(b) the number of cases of invoking of suspension contemplating disciplinary proceedings against them;

(c) the dates of suspension of those employees and corresponding dates of commencement of disciplinary proceedings indicating the number of suspended employees against whom disciplinary proceedings are yet to commence;

(d) the average time-frame for completion of disciplinary proceedings; and

(e) the number of employees placed under suspension due to facing charges/trial for criminal offences?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) Since the Indian Museum was established under an Act of Parliament as an autonomous organization, there is no post in Gazetted category in the Museum. The list of persons employed in the Museum in Group 'A', Group 'B', Group 'C' and Group 'D' of service, as on 1st January, 2007 and 2008 is given in the Statement-I (*See* below).